



Legislation Text

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Int. No. 1098

By Council Members Kallos and Holden

A Local Law to amend the administrative code of the city of New York, in relation to the digitization of historic data

Be it enacted by the Council as follows:

Section 1. Subdivision 1 of section 3004 of the New York city charter is amended to read as follows:

1. The department shall operate a municipal archives, the head of which shall be a professional archivist. The archives shall perform the following functions:

- a. develop and promulgate standards, procedures and techniques with regard to archives management;
- b. make continuing surveys of existing records to determine the most suitable methods to be used for the creating, maintaining, storing and servicing of archival material;
- c. preserve and receive all city records of historical, research, cultural or other important value;
- d. appraise, accession, classify, arrange and make available for reference all records which come into the possession of the archives; [and]
- e. identify records in the possession of the archives that consist of statistical or factual information in an alphanumeric form reflected in a list, table, graph, chart or other non-narrative form and appraise the public value of including such records on the open data web portal pursuant to chapter 5 of title 23 of the administrative code; and
- f. establish and maintain an archives depository for the storage, conservation, processing and servicing of records.

§ 2. Chapter 5 of title 23 of the administrative code of the city of New York is amended by adding a new

section 23-507 to read as follows:

§ 23-507 Historic data. a. The department of records and information services shall consider the following factors when appraising the public value of including a record in their possession on the open data web portal, pursuant to paragraph e of subdivision 1 of section 3004 of the charter:

1. the degree of historical, research, cultural or other important value of such record;
2. the clarity and completeness of such record;
3. whether such record is a continuation of or analogous to any public data set, or if such record would be considered a public data set were it contemporaneously maintained on a computer system; and
4. whether such record has been requested pursuant to subdivision d of section 23-503 or by a request made to the department of records and information services.

b. Any records determined by the department of records and information services, pursuant to subdivision a, to be of sufficient public value to be included on the open data web portal shall be converted into a digital format that permits automated processing and made available on the open data web portal in accordance with this chapter's requirements for public data sets.

c. By July 1, 2021, the department of records and information services shall make a complete survey of the records of in its possession to appraise their public value, pursuant to subdivision a, and make such records available on the open data web portal by such time, provided that if at such time a record is appraised to have sufficient public value but is too technically or practically difficult to convert by such time then the department of records and information services shall report to the speaker and the mayor a description of the record, a description of the technical or practical difficulty, and the date by which such record will be made available. Such survey shall be conducted in consultation with members of the public from historic, research, cultural and academic institutions. Any record received after July 1, 2021 shall be evaluated to appraise its public value within one year of receipt. Any record previously appraised and found to be of insufficient public value may be reappraised by the department of records and information services at any time.

d. The department of records and information services shall conduct outreach to entities with experience in converting books or other paper records to digital formats to discuss the possibility of converting all, or nearly all, of the records in the possession of the archives of the department of records and information services into searchable digital formats, and making records with statistical or factual information in an alphanumeric form reflected in a list, table, graph, chart or other non-narrative form available on the open data web portal. If the commissioner of records and information services determines that such a conversion would be feasible then a written determination, including a planned date of completion, shall be sent to the speaker and the mayor, and such conversion, if completed and maintained, shall satisfy the requirements of subdivisions a, b and c of this section.

§ 3. By July 1, 2019, the department of records and information services shall report to the speaker and the mayor a description of the outreach efforts conducted pursuant to subdivision d of section 23-507 of the administrative code.

§ 4. This local law takes effect immediately.

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